State of Illinois
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Department of Public Health
Eric E. Whitaker, M.D., M.P.H., Director

Women's Health Programs

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Why Women's Health?

- Traditionally, medical education and research related to women's health has focused on reproductive health. Yet today's women are living nearly half of their lives outside their reproductive years.

- While living longer than men, women are not necessarily living better and are more vulnerable to certain chronic conditions like osteoporosis, lupus, thyroid disease and depression.

- Women have unique medical needs because of their female physiology, reproductive ability and related hormonal influences. As a result, women demonstrate different symptoms for certain conditions and often respond to treatments differently than men.

- Until recently, many studies on the detection, treatment and prevention of disease were conducted on men only. These results were generalized to women without proof that they applied to females in the same way.

Resources and Activities

- Women's Health-Line, 1-888-522-1282
- Publications
- Speakers bureau
- Annual Women's Health Conference
- Educational teleconferences

Office of Women's Health

Reaching Illinois women is at the core of every activity conducted by the Illinois Department of Public Health's Office of Women's Health. The office was established in 1997 and is now one of the largest state offices of its kind in the country.

It's mission is

- to improve the health of Illinois women and girls by initiating, facilitating and coordinating women's health awareness, education and programming throughout the state;
- to encourage healthier lifestyles among women; and
- to promote equitable public policy on health issues that affect women today and in the future.

- Public and professional education
- Women's health legislation tracking
- Women's health status analysis
- Special outreach events
- Website Resources

Programs

Breast and Cervical Cancer Program

This statewide program offers free breast and cervical cancer screenings for women between the ages of 35 and 64 who have low incomes and no health insurance. Women diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer while enrolled in the program can receive treatment benefits through the Illinois Department of Public Aid.

WISEWOMAN Program

This research program, currently being piloted in designated areas of the state, is designed to help women in the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program to reduce their risk for heart disease and to promote a heart-healthy lifestyle. The program is expected to become statewide in the future.

Education Programs

The Office of Women's Health funds a variety of education programs offered through local health departments, not-for-profit community agencies and schools. The programs include multi-week curricula and/or health promotion activities that address cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, eating disorders, menopause and other health related issues. The goal is to help women and young girls to change behaviors that can lead to healthier lifestyles. Educational sessions cover nutrition, exercise, risk assessment, treatment options and prevention strategies. Some programs focus specifically on individuals at risk, while others focus on providers and professionals who come in contact with those at risk.

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Funding Opportunities

- **Women's Health Initiative Grants and Mini-Grants for special activities**

  These grants fund educational curricula and promotional activities focusing on cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, menopause, eating disorders and other health issues. Local health departments and community organizations are encouraged to apply for funding.

- **Penny Severns Breast and Cervical Cancer Research Fund**

  These grants fund institutional research projects related to investigating causes, prevention and treatment for breast and cervical cancer.

Announcements about grant opportunities, special events, publications and resources are available by calling the **Women's Health-Line at 1-888-522-1282** (TTY 1-800-547-0466), or by checking the Illinois Department of Public Health's Web site: <**www.idph.state.il.us**>.

Working Together

The Office of Women's Health works in partnership with the Governor's Office, state and local government agencies, local health departments, non-for-profit organizations, businesses, health and medical professionals, educators and advocates. As a clearinghouse for women's health services, information and education, the office serves as a resource to its partners, as well as to consumers.

Questions about women's health
can be directed to

Women's Health-Line
888-522-1282

TTY
(hearing impaired use only)
800-547-0466

Illinois Department of Public Health
Office of Women's Health
535 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761
www.idph.state.il.us

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